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**Grace Meng**

**Congress of the United States**

**Sixth District, New York**

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November 8, 2019

The Honorable Stephen Dickson  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Commission  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Dickson:

I write today to express my grave concern about the aviation noise epidemic my constituents endure daily, and the inaction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to engage in good faith with my district, which borders LaGuardia Airport. As a founding member and former co-chair of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus and representative of New York's sixth congressional district, I speak on behalf of my constituents in demanding improved community outreach from the FAA.

Airplane noise is more than just an annoyance; it is a very serious threat to the health and wellbeing of my constituents. According to a recent study from Columbia University, entitled "The Trade-Off Between Optimizing Flight Patterns and Human Health: A Case Study of Aircraft Noise In Queens, NY, USA," airplane noise can lead to anxiety, depression, and even premature death. These are real concerns and must not be diminished.

The Federal Aviation Reauthorization Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-254) required the FAA Administrator to appoint Regional Aviation Noise Ombudsmen to "serve as a liaison with the public on issues regarding aircraft noise" and "be consulted when the Administrator proposes changes in aircraft routes so as to minimize any increases in aircraft noise over populated areas." After speaking to my constituents, it has become clear the Aviation Noise Ombudsmen have not been fulfilling their obligation to comprehensively engage my community. I was disturbed to learn the FAA has erroneously interpreted the 2018 FAA Reauthorization, wherein it has determined that limiting engagement with only airport community roundtables suffices its mandated community liaison requirements.

Roundtables represent critical and committed voices in the airplane noise conversation. They do not, however, speak for the entire community. Furthermore, in some communities around the country, there are no roundtables with which to communicate. I am deeply concerned by the neglect and exclusion of certain community voices when it comes to an issue that is so important

in the day to day life of my constituents. Large swaths of our community who are affected by airplane noise but do not participate in roundtables will have no say in these processes.

While I support the FAA's engagement with dedicated Airport Community Roundtables, the FAA must extend the conversation beyond these entities. All civic voices and constituents must be invited to join these conversations.

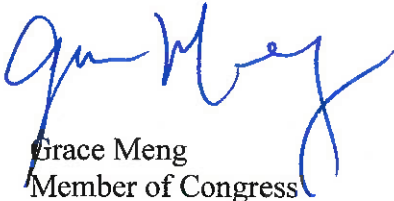
Additionally, I urge you to include linguistically appropriate community outreach and engagement with those who have limited English proficiency. My district of Queens is one of the most diverse places in the country, with more languages spoken than the United Nations. Meaningful engagement with everyone who is impacted by airplane noise – regardless of their primary language – would be significant for those in my own district, as well as across the nation.

Lastly, conversations must be two-way. Community engagement does not entail FAA merely informing constituents of its plans; it must also seek out and expand opportunities for community input and conduct expansive environmental studies for any flight pattern alterations prior to those changes being implemented.

My constituents have suffered enough; for far too long, the FAA has failed my community. It is time the agency works with the *entire* community and regain the trust after its repeated neglect and oversight.

I look forward to your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress